



# Louisa May ALCOTT

(1832 - 1888)

Louisa May Alcott was an American writer in the 1800s. She wrote *Little Women* and other books that were not published in her name.

Her writing for young adults is still very popular today.

## Louisa's Childhood

Louisa was born in 1832 in Pennsylvania, USA. She was the second of four daughters: Anna Bronson Alcott was the eldest; Elizabeth Sewall Alcott and Abigail May Alcott were the two youngest.

Louisa did not go to school. Her father was a teacher and taught her at home until 1848. Her mother was a social worker.

Well-known people, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry David Thoreau were family friends and taught her lessons.

## What happened in Louisa's life?

Louisa's family did not have much money, and this meant that she was forced to work from an early age. Louisa worked at many jobs, including as a teacher, seamstress, governess, domestic helper, and writer.

During the Civil war (1860), she moved to Washington D.C to work as a nurse for 6 weeks because she got typhoid and became very ill.

In 1858 her younger sister died and her older sister married.



Louisa May Alcott



### Louisa’s Writing Career

Louisa published work in her own name, but she also published work using other names, Flora Fairfield and A.M Barnard.

Louisa’s novel ‘Little Women’ is very well known and is based on Louisa’s childhood experiences with her three sisters.

In Little Women, Alcott based her heroine “Jo” on herself. But whereas Jo marries at the end of the story, Alcott remained single throughout her life.



Louisa May Alcott commemorative stamp, 1940 issue

### Later years

Louisa was very ill and had health problems after she worked in the hospital in Boston. She had a stroke, and died aged 55, 2 days after her father died.

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